

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LISBON 00176 091935Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5594

INFO AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 0176

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PO

SUBJECT: ANGOLA: POSSIBLE GOP RECOGNITION OF MPLA

REF: LISBON 0142

1. MARIO SOARES ASKED TO SEE ME URGENTLY TODAY JAN 9. FIRST ITEM ON HIS AGENDA WAS ANGOLA. WE TRADED INFORMATION ON CUBAN TRANSIT OF AZORES. HE INDICATED THAT HE HAD TALKED TO PRIME MINISTER SEVERAL DAYS AGO AND PM HAD TOLD HIM HE WOULD TAKE MEASURES. (RELIABLE SOURCE IN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE TOLD US AZEVEDO CALLED COSTA GOMES FOLLOWING OUR MEETING YESTERDAY - REFTEL - AND URGED THAT GOP USE ITS INFLUENCE WITH CAPE VERDE TO PREVENT CUBAN TRANSIT THERE AS WELL.) SOARES SAID THAT IT WAS SCANDALOUS FOR GOP TO HAVE ALLOWED CUBAN TRANSIT OF AZORES AND STEPS WOULD HAVE TO BE TAKEN TO UNCOVER THOSE RESPONSIBLE. HE WONDERED IF COSTA GOMES WAS TO BLAME.

2. SOARES SAID HE URGENTLY NEEDED MY ADVICE. A STRONG EFFORT WAS BEING MADE BY COSTA GOMES, MELO ANTUNES AND CRESPO TO HAVE THE GOP RECOGNIZE MPLA. THEIR ARGUMENT WAS THAT THE AMERICANS WERE GIVING UP, THE MPLA WAS GOING TO WIN AND PORTUGAL HAD VITAL INTERESTS TO PROTECT. THEY ALSO ARGUED THAT PORTUGUESE RECOGNITION WOULD HELP WEAKEN MPLA

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PAGE 02 LISBON 00176 091935Z

DEPENDENCE ON SOVIETS. ANTUNES HAD TOLD SOARES THAT IF

SOCIALISTS WOULD AGREE TO MPLA RECOGNITION HE WAS SURE HE  
COULD CARRY THE MILITARY WHO WERE PRESENTLY OPPOSING RECOGNITION.

3. I REVIEWED WITH SOARES THE SAME POINTS I HAD MADE WITH  
PRIME MINISTER LAST NIGHT (REFTEL). I NOTED THAT MPLA HAD  
SHOWN NO SIGNS OF WANTING TO WEAKEN ITS DEPENDENCE ON SOVIETS,  
AND HE AGREED THAT WAS NOW THE CASE. I STRESSED THAT THE US  
DID NOT INTEND TO ABANDON ITS WORLD RESPONSIBILITIES, AND NOTED  
THAT PORTUGAL HAD LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY AS WELL. FOR  
PORTUGAL TO RECOGNIZE MPLA ON EVE OF OAU SUMMIT AS MELO ANTUNES  
WAS URGING COULD SET OFF UNDESIRABLE CHAIN REACTION. SOARES SAID  
MELO ANTUNES HAD TOLD HIM ALL AFRICANS WOULD SOON BE SUPPORTING  
MPLA AND THAT PORTUGAL NEEDED TO GET AHEAD OF THE TIDAL WAVE  
IF IT WAS TO RETAIN ITS INFLUENCE IN THE THIRD WORLD. BRAZIL  
HAD RECOGNIZED MPLA FOR THIS REASON. WHY NOT PORTUGAL? I  
TOLD HIM THAT RECOGNITION OF MPLA BY ALL AFRICAN COUNTRIES WAS  
BY NO MEANS A FOREGONE CONCLUSION. WE HOPED, IN FACT, THAT  
THE OAU SUMMIT WOULD DEAL WITH ANGOLA ISSUE IN A REALISTIC  
FASHION. WE WERE CONDUCTING A MAJOR DIPLOMATIC CAMPAIGN  
TO ASSURE THAT THIS WAS THE CASE. MOREOVER, PORTUGAL WAS A  
EUROPEAN COUNTRY NOT A MEMBER OF THE THIRD WORLD. SOARES  
WONDERED WHETHER THE BRITISH WERE VACILLATING ON RECOGNITION.  
I TOLD HIM THAT THE BRITISH HAD RECENTLY CONDUCTED A DIPLO-  
MATIC OFFENSIVE DESIGNED TO SUPPORT A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL  
UNITY, AND THAT WE HAD NO REASON WHATSOEVER TO ASSUME THAT THE  
UK INTENDED TO RECOGNIZE MPLA. (DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO URGE  
BRITISH TO TALK WITH SOARES.)

4. I TOLD SOARES THAT LUANDA HAD BECOME AN IMPORTANT AND  
SENSITIVE POLITICAL ISSUE IN THE US. THE PRESIDENT AND THE  
SECRETARY HAD EXPRESSED THEIR DETERMINATION TO SEE THE MATTER  
THROUGH TO THE END. SOARES WOULD DISCOVER HOW IMPORTANT THIS  
SUBJECT WAS WHEN HE ARRIVED IN WASHINGTON. HE INSTANTLY  
GRASPED THE POINT.

5. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THIS PART OF OUR CONVERSATION SOARES  
THANKED ME AND SAID "THIS CLARIFIES THIS ISSUE FOR ME."  
CARLUCCI

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## Message Attributes

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